

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

# 2008 Report to the Legislature

Progress Establishing Coastal Marine Resource  
Committees



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH and  
WILDLIFE**

# 2008 Report to the Legislature

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## Progress Establishing Coastal Marine Resource Committees

December 2008

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# 2008 Report to the Legislature

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## Progress Establishing Coastal Marine Resource Committees

### SUMMARY

In the 2007 and 2008 legislative sessions, the Washington State Legislature endorsed the Marine Resource Committee (MRC) approach to local marine resource management and stewardship in the five southern Puget Sound counties and five coastal counties. A new program was created within the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to provide support for the development, administration, and coordination of coastal MRCs and MRC-sponsored projects that benefit coastal marine resources.

Coastal counties and their citizens are currently exploring this opportunity to create a non-regulatory mechanism for communities to discuss and develop solutions for issues facing coastal resources and communities. Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, and Pacific Counties are working in partnership with WDFW, coastal tribes, governmental agencies, marine industry and businesses, non-governmental organizations, and local citizens to understand and explore the MRC approach. Grays Harbor County, first to take steps towards forming an MRC, has established a formal planning process, launched a website, and produced a report on the application of the MRC model developed in north Puget Sound to the coast of Washington.

Those involved in coastal MRC activities have identified countless opportunities to implement much-needed marine resource projects and build vital communication networks and partnerships among coastal residents. They have also identified several challenges such as great travel distances, rural and small communities, and an already crowded landscape of resource management programs and authorities. Residents, governments, and organizations have used these challenges to develop new and creative solutions and a unique approach appropriate for the coast. Implementation of these developments will require continued Coastal MRC Program funding at or above the current level.

Guided by the Washington Ocean Action Plan, MRC activity will improve scientific knowledge, public understanding, protection and restoration, and management of marine habitats and species and compliment ongoing efforts to preserve and enhance coastal and ocean resources.

## BACKGROUND

Washington’s coastal and ocean resources provide vital economic, recreation, transportation, and cultural benefits to coastal and state residents. Identifying and implementing realistic, effective, and efficient solutions to the unique conservation and management issues of Washington’s outer coast will require utilizing the available knowledge and creative approaches of coastal citizens and leaders. Citizen-based Marine Resource Committees (MRCs) are an effective mechanism to harness the dedication, innovation, and wisdom of coastal residents to compliment ongoing efforts to restore, protect, and manage coastal marine resources.

The Nation’s coasts have received increased attention in recent years. The U.S. Ocean and Pew Commissions focused national attention on the coasts in 2006. Washington State responded with the establishment of the Washington–British Columbia Coastal and Ocean Task Force, the Ocean Policy Work Group, and the State Ocean Caucus. The Ocean Policy Work Group completed their work with the publication of the Washington Ocean Action Plan in 2006 and, most recently, the West Coast Governor’s Agreement on Ocean Health was announced in 2008.

The Washington Ocean Action Plan details the status of coastal communities and ocean resources.<sup>1</sup> In addition to significant contributions to Washington’s economy, coastal resources maintain cultural identities, sustain coastal economies and communities, and provide food and opportunities for enjoyment. Although the coastal environment is relatively healthy compared to the Puget Sound, invasive species, toxic algal blooms, coastal hazards, habitat loss, water quality, and land use issues increasingly threaten human health and safety, livelihoods, and the ecological resilience of the coastal environment. New threats include increasing coastal development, sea level rise and climate change, ocean energy production, and – for coastal communities – increasing unemployment and changing community population demographics. Washington’s Ocean Action Plan also provides recommendations for improving protection and management of the state’s ocean resources organized under six topics: marine resource stewardship, coastal vulnerabilities from marine sources, coastal pollution, ocean research and education, sustainable and resilient communities, and governance. Marine Resource Committees are highlighted in the Plan as a creative and useful governance mechanism.<sup>2</sup>

In the 2007 and 2008 legislative sessions, the Washington State Legislature endorsed the MRC approach to local marine resource management and stewardship in the five southern Puget Sound counties and five coastal counties.<sup>3</sup> The legislature created a new program within Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to provide support for the development, administration, and coordination of coastal MRCs and MRC-sponsored projects that benefit

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<sup>1</sup> The Ocean Policy Work Group. 2006. Washington’s Ocean Action Plan: Enhancing Management of Washington State’s Ocean and Outer Coasts: Volume 2: Final Report of the Washington State Ocean Policy Work Group. The Office of the Governor, Olympia, WA.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 113-162

<sup>3</sup> Substitute Senate Bill 6231 and Substitute House Bill 2049 are codified in the Revised Code of Washington title 36 chapter 125.

coastal and marine resources. The Puget Sound Partnership was directed to facilitate the establishment of the five south Puget Sound MRCs.

The MRC model was first developed through the Northwest Straits Initiative in 1998. This federally-funded program supports MRCs in the seven northern Puget Sound counties and has become a national example of effective regional collaboration and citizen involvement in marine resource protection, management, and restoration.

## **The Northwest Straits Initiative**

The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative is a creative and distinctly local approach to marine resource management. First developed in response to a proposal by the National Marine Sanctuary Program to establish a sanctuary in northern Puget Sound, U.S. Senator Patty Murray and U.S. Representative Jack Metcalf tasked a citizens panel, called the Northwest Straits Citizens Advisory Commission and informally known as the “kitchen commission,” with developing an organic approach to marine resource stewardship.<sup>4</sup>

The Northwest Straits Initiative has evolved to consist of a Commission that acts as a board of directors to seven MRCs, overseeing and coordinating activity and providing resources and expertise. The 13-member Commission is composed of one representative from each MRC, one tribal representative appointed by the Secretary of Interior, and five gubernatorial appointees.<sup>5</sup>

The authorizing legislation required a blue ribbon panel evaluation of the Northwest Straits Initiative, its Commission, and seven MRCs after five years. In addition to glowing reviews by the panel chaired by Bill Ruckelshaus, the panel concluded that the Northwest Straits Initiative was so successful at locally directed, regionally coordinated marine conservation that the approach should be replicated in other geographic locations.<sup>6</sup> Further, the panel encouraged the Northwest Straits Commission to engage in replication of the model while cautioning against overstressing the Commission staff and region of focus.

## **What are MRCs?**

MRCs – on the coast and in Puget Sound – are county-based committees that carry out local projects and activities and advise the county on issues pertaining to marine resources. MRCs are created and defined by county resolution or ordinance. Counties determine operational procedures and appoint committee members. MRCs are required by statute to be broadly representative, but counties have the ability to further specify membership or committee focus according to the needs of the county, its citizenry, and marine resources.

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<sup>4</sup> Washington Sea Grant. 1998. Murray – Metcalf Northwest Straits Citizens Advisory Commission: Report to the Convenors. Washington Sea Grant Program, University of Washington.

<sup>5</sup> For more information about the Northwest Straits Initiative, visit: [www.nwstraits.org](http://www.nwstraits.org)

<sup>6</sup> Ruckelshaus et al. 2004. Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative: Five-Year Evaluation Report. Washington State University Extension and University of Washington. Page 25-26.

Marine Resource Committees are composed of representatives from the scientific community, local and tribal governments, local citizens, and economic, recreational and conservation interests. Each county-based MRC sets local resource priorities and, sponsors and oversees projects to address priorities. Through their activities, MRCs coordinate diverse partners, support resourceful, action-oriented solutions, and provide a platform for education and outreach on local issues.

Recognizing the existence of a similar state program focused on salmon and watershed issues, the legislature authorized Salmon Recovery Lead Entities to act as a MRC for a county in lieu of creating a new entity if practical and desirable. The Lead Entity Program organizes citizen volunteers at the watershed scale around local salmon recovery projects.<sup>7</sup> The focus of MRCs and Lead Entities is complementary, but different; however, especially in rural counties, significant volunteer membership overlap could make Lead Entity and MRC coordination advantageous.

## **WASHINGTON'S COASTAL MRC PROGRAM**

The Coastal Marine Resource Committee Program was created within WDFW to implement 2007 and 2008 session law (SSB 6231 and SHB 2049) by providing support for the development, administration, and coordination of coastal MRCs and MRC-sponsored projects that benefit coastal marine resources. Through the Coastal MRC Program, WDFW is directed to carry out the following tasks. Actions in each task area are reported below.

- Allocate programmatic funding for MRC activities and projects
  - Action: Counties and citizens requested coastal MRC funding to support a thorough and deliberate local process to consider whether to form a MRC. WDFW responded by making funds available to counties to support public meetings and other outreach activities in advance of formal MRC formation. Additional MRC project and administrative/coordination support is available to counties once a MRC is formed by county ordinance or resolution.
  - Action: WDFW allocated \$50,000 to Grays Harbor County (6/1/08 – 6/30/09) to support exploratory MRC activity.
  - Action: WDFW allocated \$4,900 to Surfrider Foundation (2/1/08 – 6/30/08) to support Grays Harbor County MRC exploratory activities.
  - Action: WDFW allocated \$25,000 to Jefferson County (7/1/08 – 6/30/09) to support exploratory MRC activity.
  - Action: WDFW is awaiting final agreement on contracts with both Clallam and Jefferson Counties that will allocate \$25,000 to each county to support exploratory MRC activity (12/8/08 – 6/30/09 projected contract duration).

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<sup>7</sup> For more information about the Lead Entity Program, visit [http://wdfw.wa.gov/grants/lead\\_entities/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/grants/lead_entities/).

- Assist MRCs to measure their activities against regional performance benchmarks
  - Action: WDFW convened an ad hoc advisory committee called the Coastal MRC Work Group to develop performance benchmarks. Finalization of benchmarks is expected on January 7, 2009 (detail provided below).
- Support the coordination of MRC projects to complement regional priorities
  - Action: WDFW tasked the Coastal MRC Work Group to articulate priority areas for Coastal MRC Program activity consistent with the Washington Ocean Action Plan (detail provided below).
  - Action: WDFW communicates monthly with the State Ocean Caucus, the group charged with overseeing the implementation of the Washington Ocean Action Plan.
- Coordinate the communication and promote interactions among Coastal MRCs, other similar groups, and with the Northwest Straits Commission on issues of common interest
  - Action: WDFW and the Northwest Straits Commission staff developed and hosted a joint conference session to exchange information between Coastal and Northwest Straits MRC activities (detail provided below).
  - Action: WDFW has provided briefings on Coastal MRC activity to County Commissioners, Jefferson and Clallam County Northwest Straits MRCs, the Lead Entity Advisory Group, and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Committee.

In June 2008 a Coastal MRC Program Coordinator was hired by WDFW to facilitate coastal MRC establishment. One of the coordinator's first actions was to circulate to potentially interested coastal entities an invitation to (1) participate in the Coastal MRC Program by engaging in the process at the county level, and (2) participate in an ad hoc advisory group to develop basic elements of the Coastal MRC Program.

Although there are areas in which the Coastal MRC Program may depart from the Northwest Straits model, there are areas of basic correspondence. For example, the Coastal MRC Program is analogous to the Northwest Straits Initiative and the Coastal MRC Program Coordinator is analogous to the staff of the Northwest Straits Commission. The Coastal MRC Work Group is analogous to something between the "kitchen commission" and the Northwest Straits Commission.

### **The Coastal MRC Work Group: An Ad Hoc Citizens Advisory Committee**

The ad hoc advisory committee called the Coastal MRC Work Group is broadly representative of coastal interests. Appendix A contains a complete list of participants and their affiliations. Generally, participants in the work group include:

- **Citizens**, Lead Entities, and coastal salmon recovery and water quality partnerships/councils.
- **Governmental representatives** from the Makah, Quileute, Hoh Tribes, the Quinault Indian National, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. Federal representatives from the National Marine Sanctuaries Program. State representatives from Washington Department of Natural Resources, Puget Sound Partnership, and Fish and Wildlife. County representatives from Pacific, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson Counties, as well as City, Port, and Conservation District representatives.
- **Environmental and conservation interests** represented are Surfrider Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, and Friends of Grays Harbor.
- **Industry representatives** from commercial and recreational fishing associations and private business.
- **University** extension program representatives.

Together this group and others recognize that the unique and diverse challenges facing the coast will require innovative solutions developed and implemented by a broad array of entities, partners, and citizens. The Coastal MRC Work Group sees the MRC model as a promising structure through which local priorities can be addressed and science-based activities can be funded and implemented.

The Coastal MRC Work Group assembled three times in 2008 (September 5, October 10, December 3) to articulate interim Coastal MRC Program priorities and develop performance benchmarks to guide Coastal MRC activity and ensure coordination with other efforts and accountability to WDFW and ultimately the legislature. Appendix B includes a brief summary of each meeting. Members were self selected to participate and meetings were open to all. Meeting times and locations were not publically posted, but were distributed widely by email to interested parties. In requesting the development of priorities and benchmarks by this ad hoc work group, WDFW has invested in the work group's process and will honor the group's products and decisions. Development of benchmarks and program priorities will be finalized at the work group's January 7, 2009 meeting.

The members of the Coastal MRC Program Work Group anticipate the need to adjust and adapt the benchmarks and priority statements over time. Therefore, the work group has agreed to use the term *interim* benchmarks and priority statements. Interim benchmark and priority statements will be formally adopted by consensus and upheld by the work group until they are amended by group decision in the future. Also, each MRC will need to develop its own local priorities and objectives. The programmatic benchmarks are not intended to restrict the ability of individual counties to carry out activities that may fall outside the existing benchmark as long as they address the overarching program goal. The draft goal of the Coastal MRC Program, which will also be finalized at the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, is:

***To understand, steward, and restore the marine and estuarine ecological processes of the Washington coast in support of ecosystem health, sustainable marine resource-based livelihoods, cultural integrity, and coastal communities.***

### **Coastal MRC Program Priorities**

A stated priority of the legislature is to continue state and local efforts – such as those of the Ocean Policy Work Group, Lead Entities, existing Northwest Straits MRCs, and other groups – to preserve and enhance coastal and ocean resources. Coastal MRC activity is guided by the Washington Ocean Action Plan and complements ongoing local and regional efforts. When finalized, articulated Coastal MRC Program priorities will promote establishment of county-based MRCs, coordination with complementary local and regional efforts, and stewardship and science-based understanding of marine and estuarine resources and coastal hazards. Priority statements will also convey respect of tribal governments and peoples, promote inclusion of local citizens, and ultimately promote healthy coastal communities and marine resources.

### **Performance Benchmarks**

Performance benchmarks are intended to be used by the Coastal MRC Program to measure MRC activities and achievement in discrete but broad categories. In developing performance benchmarks, the work group strives to achieve balance between (1) keeping benchmarks broad enough to capture diverse projects types, local priorities, and differing approaches of north and south coast MRC efforts and (2) inserting enough specificity to unify MRC efforts, make measuring performance easier, and avoiding redundancy with other efforts.

The following is a list of the draft categories agreed to by the work group. Each category and its associated action statement will be followed by specific activity areas that can and will be used to account for MRC effort.

- Marine Habitats: Understand, steward, and restore marine, estuarine, coastal, and nearshore habitats, prevent loss, and achieve a net gain of healthy habitat areas
- Marine Life: Understand, steward, and restore marine and estuarine populations to healthy, sustainable levels

- Marine and Fresh Water Quality: Understand, steward, and restore marine and estuarine water quality of Washington’s coast and coastal embayments, and restore the health of marine waters
- Sound Science: Collect high quality data and promote its use and dissemination
- Education and Outreach: Promote stewardship and understanding of coastal estuarine and marine resources through education and outreach
- Coastal Communities: Promote sustainable and resilient coastal communities

## **Coordination with the Northwest Straits Commission**

The Northwest Straits Commission has expressed solid support of the expansion of the MRC model and of development of MRCs on Washington’s Coast. Commission members and Commission staff have attended Coastal MRC Work Group meetings and made themselves available to the Coastal MRC Program Coordinator to field questions and convey lessons learned over the past decade. The Coastal MRC Program is stronger and more likely to produce successful outcomes as a result of the Commission’s support.

The Northwest Straits Commission hosts an annual MRC training conference to provide an opportunity for MRCs to share ideas and coordinate approaches to marine conservation and protection. At its 2008 training conference (November 7-8, Port Angeles), the Northwest Straits Commission dedicated a session to the application of the MRC model to the outer coast. The session was entitled “Citizen-based Marine Conservation: the Northwest Straits 101 and Outer Coast MRCs” and included an history and overview of the Northwest Straits Initiative presented by Tom Cowan (Puget Sound Partnership) and Kathy Fletcher (People for Puget Sound) and an introduction to the pilot application of the model on the coast presented by Tim Smith (WDFW) and Brie Van Cleve (WDFW). A panel facilitated by Jody Kennedy (Surfrider Foundation) addressed associated challenges and opportunities during a question and answer period. Panel members included:

- Tom Cowen, former Director of the Northwest Straits Commission
- Kathy Fletcher, Northwest Straits Commission member
- Tim Smith, WDFW Director’s Special Assistant and advocate of citizen led and science-based salmon recovery and coastal MRCs
- Brie Van Cleve, WDFW Coastal MRC Program Coordinator
- Kirby Johnson, Snohomish County MRC Member and Northwest Straits Commission member
- Rich Osborne, North Pacific Lead Entity Coordinator and former San Juan County MRC Coordinator
- Commissioner Mike Doherty, Clallam County Commissioner District 3 and advocate for Puget Sound and coastal MRCs

- Kit Rawson Tulalip Tribes Fisheries Management Program Manager and former chair of the San Juan County MRC

The session provided an opportunity for WDFW staff, County Commissioners, existing MRC and Northwest Straits Commission members, and those involved in the Coastal MRC process to share knowledge and establish working relationships in anticipation of future opportunities for coastal and Northwest Straits MRCs to collaborate on projects of mutual benefit. Twelve Coastal MRC Work Group members were in attendance. Work group members found the experience informative, encouraging, and reassuring that the grass-roots elements of the original model are alive and well ten years later.

## COUNTY ACTIVITY

WDFW has invited all five counties – Wahkiakum, Pacific, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Clallam – to develop MRCs. Following outreach efforts in the five coastal counties, Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, and Pacific Counties are all evaluating forming an MRC. These four counties are – or are in the process of – entering into a contract agreement with WDFW to obtain MRC “exploratory” funding. WDFW designated a portion of available funds to support county-based discussions, meetings, and outreach efforts necessary for County Commissioners and residents to decide whether an MRC should be formed. Additional funds are available to each county once an MRC is formed to support MRC projects and administrative capacity.

### Grays Harbor County

Grays Harbor County was the first county to initiate MRC activities. Grays Harbor County has initiated a set of 6 exploratory MRC (E-MRC) meetings to consider the type of MRC organization and projects that best reflect the county’s coastal needs. A recommendation to the Grays Harbor County Commissioners from the Grays Harbor County E-MRC regarding whether or not to form an MRC is expected in February 2009. Grays Harbor County MRC activities began with a review of the enabling legislation and experiences and accomplishments of other MRCs organized under the Northwest Straits Commission. This review culminated in a report prepared for the Grays Harbor County E-MRC entitled Grays Harbor County Marine Resources Committee Informational Workbook.<sup>8</sup> The workbook includes profiles of the seven Northwest Straits MRCs through MRC member interviews, a compilation of lessons learned during Northwest Straits MRC formation and development, an analysis of barriers to implementing the existing model on the coast, and a comparison of the federally funded approach (the Northwest Straits Initiative) versus the state funded approach (the Coastal MRC Program). Grays Harbor County has also launched a MRC website<sup>9</sup> hosting background and meeting information, relevant links, and contact information.

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<sup>8</sup> Kliem and Holden. 2008. Grays Harbor County Marine Resources Committee Informational Workbook. Prepared by Creative Community Solutions under contract to Grays Harbor County Department of Public Services. Available at: [http://www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us/info/pub\\_svcs/MRC/information\\_links/workbook.pdf](http://www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us/info/pub_svcs/MRC/information_links/workbook.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Grays Harbor County MRC Website: [http://www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us/info/pub\\_svcs/MRC/index.html](http://www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us/info/pub_svcs/MRC/index.html)

## **Jefferson County**

A coordinator was identified early in November and residents of western Jefferson County had their first opportunity to attend a county-organized MRC meeting later that month. Members of the Hoh River Residents' Association and Hoh Tribal staff were in attendance, and the concept and purpose of MRC formation was discussed at length. Grays Harbor County MRC materials were shared in addition to the Washington Ocean Action Plan. Outcomes included indentifying potential project and outreach ideas. A letter to west Jefferson County residents is being drafted for distribution early in January in preparation for a series of meetings and activities in February and March. The group appreciates the efforts of Grays Harbor County in providing a model for MRC development; Lee Napier, the group's coordinator, has offered to attend an MRC meeting in west Jefferson County early next year.

Currently, Jefferson County is pursuing exploratory activities independent of, but in coordination with Clallam County coastal MRC activities. These include a survey and outreach events in early 2009. Both counties have the benefit of already being home to Northwest Straits MRCs. The existing MRCs are active and well supported by residents and County Commissioners. The existing Jefferson County Northwest Straits MRC has articulated their support for a separate, coastal-focused MRC.

The North Pacific Coast Lead Entity (NPCLE) focus area covers western portions of both Jefferson and Clallam Counties and both counties are members of NPCLE. Both those outside and within this group have deliberated about NPCLE acting as the MRC for both counties. The benefits of this arrangement could include more fully utilizing the talents of the current NPCLE Coordinator and not forming a new group when an organizational structure already exists. Concerns under consideration involve ensuring that citizens are the driving force within the new MRC, not overextending NPCLE members, and assuring appropriate technical expertise represented if the NPCLE expands its focus to include marine projects.

## **Clallam County**

As in Jefferson County, Clallam County benefits from experience with the MRC model, and the existing Clallam County Northwest Straits MRC has expressed support for forming a coastal-focused MRC. Clallam County will initiate its formal exploratory MRC activities in the new year. Activities will include outreach meetings with western Clallam County residents and groups and continuing discussions with the NPCLE. The Lead Entity Coordinator is leading Clallam County's coastal MRC efforts. See above for details on NPCLE's deliberations regarding expanding their current focus to include marine resource committee work.

## **Pacific County**

Pacific County Commissioners will decide whether to pursue exploratory MRC activities on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. An affirmative decision is expected and meetings and outreach activities are already planned for the new year. As in Clallam County, the Pacific County Lead Entity Coordinator is leading Pacific County MRC efforts under direction of the Pacific County Department of Community Development.

## **EMERGING ISSUES, CONCERNS, OPPORTUNITIES**

Outreach meetings and the three Coastal MRC Work Group meetings have provided numerous occasions to highlight opportunities and potential barriers associated with coastal MRC activity. Those involved in coastal MRC planning note important distinguishing geographic and demographic factors of the north coast and the southern portion of the coast that warrant slightly different approaches in these areas. Differing issues and governmental and non-governmental partners will distinguish MRC actions along the coast. MRCs provide a vehicle for community visioning and consensus-building, supporting coastal resource-based communities, improving access to marine resources, filling science gaps, improving education, and preventing future resource degradation. The Coastal MRC Program also provides an opportunity to connect coastal residents to state ocean policy.

Challenges identified include finding and achieving an appropriate level of participation in MRC activities from federal and tribal partners, logistical issues associated with combining Lead Entities and MRCs, ensuring steady Coastal MRC Program funding, achieving citizen participation, balancing focus on resource protection versus resource stewardship, and keeping MRCs focused on marine and estuarine resources. Potential activity areas identified by those involved in the coastal MRC process include coastal hazards awareness and community preparedness through outreach programs, reduction in marine and estuarine pollution and debris, recovery of lost fishing gear, scientific experimentation and monitoring to fill key knowledge gaps about valuable coastal species and habitats, coastal habitat conservation and restoration, and using MRCs to promote marine resource stewardship through community volunteer opportunities and public education efforts. Finally, participants have considered what MRC organizational structure best serves coastal counties and communities. Specifically, some have discussed the coordinated formation of one coastal MRC with county-specific subcommittees.

## **FUTURE WORK**

Washington State is fortunate for a number of reasons. Three are particularly pertinent to this report. Washington state has (1) abundant, scenic, and productive shorelines and coastal waters, (2) engaged elected officials, leaders, and citizens who are concerned about challenges facing coastal communities and declining health of some marine resources, and (3) a well-developed and nationally recognized organizational mechanism that coordinates diverse partners, supports creative, action-oriented solutions, provides a platform for education and outreach on local issues, and is relatively inexpensive. Over the past year, outreach efforts have engaged many coastal residents and interested organizations in the process of developing Coastal MRCs. In addition to the future promise of on-the-ground MRC projects and activities, current discussions have strengthened relationships and provided a forum to discuss place-based marine resource and community needs.

Future coastal MRC work is dependent on continued funding at or above the current level. WDFW is pleased to continue supporting the work of coastal counties and looks forward to working with citizens and local entities to continue building the Coastal MRC Program. To

further this productive dialogue, WDFW supports the creation of a formal Coastal MRC Program advisory committee to replace the current *ad hoc* work group in the next months.

Coastal MRCs will provide a non-regulatory mechanism to discuss and develop solutions for issues facing coastal resources and communities, help promote healthy coastal communities through improved infrastructure and sustainable practices relating to marine resources, and complement and support ongoing efforts to improve scientific knowledge, public understanding, conservation and restoration, and management of marine resources.

## **APPENDIX A: COASTAL MRC WORK GROUP PARTICIPANTS**

April Boe, The Nature Conservancy  
Arthur (R.D.) Grunbaum, Friends of Grays Harbor  
Bob Burkle, WDFW  
Brie Van Cleve, WDFW Coastal MRC Program  
Colby Brady, Makah Tribe  
Corey Niles, WDFW  
Dale Beasley, Columbia River Crab Fishermen's Association  
Debbie Holden, Creative Community Solutions  
Douglas Fricke, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries  
Duane Fagergren, Puget Sound Partnership  
Ed Bowen, North Pacific Coast Lead Entity  
Eric Delvin, The Nature Conservancy  
Janet Kearsley, DNR Natural Areas Program  
Jenna Norman, WDFW Lead Entity Program  
Jennifer Hagen, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission  
Jim Neva, Port of Ilwaco  
Jody Kennedy, Surfrider Foundation  
Joe Schumacker, Quinault Indian Nation  
John Hansen, DNR  
John Kliem, Creative Community Solutions  
John Richmond, North Pacific Coast Lead Entity  
Kathy Greer, Surfrider Foundation  
Katie Krueger, Quileute Tribe  
Key McMurry, Willapa Bay Water Quality Coordinating Council/ Ecological Land Services  
Larry Bishop, Citizen at Large  
Larry Giese, Westport Charterboat Association  
Lauren Bennett, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary  
Lauri Vigue, WDFW Lead Entity Program  
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County  
Liam Antrim, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary  
Mark Cedergreen, Westport Charterboat Association  
Michael Nordin, Pacific Conservation District  
Michele Culver, WDFW, Region 6  
Mike Doherty, Clallam County Commissioner  
Mike Johnson, Pacific Conservation District/ WRIA 24  
Miles Batchelder, Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership  
Nancy Allison, Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership  
Penny Dalton, Washington Sea Grant  
Ray Toste, Washington Dungeness Crab Fishermen's Association  
Rich Osborne, Clallam County  
Shannon Serrano, Surfrider Foundation  
Steve Harbell, WSU Extension/ WA Sea Grant  
Tami Pokorny, Jefferson County

## **APPENDIX B: COASTAL MRC WORK GROUP MEETING SUMMARIES**

September 5, 2008

At the first meeting, attendees became acquainted with each other, the Coastal MRC Program Coordinator, the Northwest Straits model, and the coastal MRC authorizing statutes. Members from the State Ocean Caucus explained the intersection between the Caucus and MRCs and a member of the Northwest Straits Commission discussed development of Puget Sound MRCs and the Commission and highlighted opportunities and pitfalls to be avoided. Coordination between coastal MRCs and the State Ocean Caucus will be achieved through the Coastal MRC Coordinator who will attend State Ocean Caucus meetings and report on coastal MRC activity. The group was briefed on Grays Harbor County's "exploratory" MRC approach and informed of planned meetings and progress. The group was asked to brainstorm draft priorities appropriate for MRCs and applicable benchmarks to measure coastal MRC progress and performance.

October 10, 2008

At their October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the work group was introduced to the Lead Entity Program in order to understand the possible intersection of MRCs and Lead Entities in coastal counties. The work group discussed the opportunity to coordinate these related efforts and challenges associated with merging the similar but different foci of Lead Entities and MRCs. The group discussed a desire to keep the focus of MRCs broad enough to encompass varying county interests and also emerging and likely future coastal issues. The group reviewed and continued to revise the priority statements and benchmarks developed at the last meeting. The group also discussed the possibility of forming one coastal MRC, assuming each county by individual county action agreed.

December 3, 2008

The meeting started with an update on MRC progress in the four participating counties. The group then discussed the structure and authority of the work group. It was understood that because the work group is ad hoc, no formal authority exists, although WDFW supports creating a formal group. Work group members who attended the Northwest Straits MRC Conference shared observations from the event. The group agreed on a Coastal MRC Program goal and set of priorities. Final adoption of priorities and benchmarks is expected at the next meeting.